



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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May 13, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

**QUARTERLY UPDATE - RESPONSE TO ENSURING FOOD SECURITY FOR YOUTH WHO
AGE OUT OF FOSTER CARE BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 3, AGENDA OF
DECEMBER 13, 2011)**

On December 13, 2011, by motion of Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, with an amendment by Supervisor Antonovich, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the then Interim Directors of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to develop and implement a plan to ensure complete CalFresh applications are timely and successfully submitted on behalf of foster youth, ages 18-21, when dependency is terminated. Also, the CEO, DPSS, and DCFS are to report back quarterly on the County's improved rates of successfully enrolling aging-out foster youth into CalFresh.

The amendment by Supervisor Antonovich directed the Chief Executive Officer, the then Interim Directors of DCFS and Probation Department, in consultation with Faith-Based community partners, County-contracted providers, youth and foundations, to: (1) develop a comprehensive resource guide for all food banks, food closets, and public programs for provision to all exiting youth; (2) solicit donations of food store gift cards from the community and community foundations for distribution to youth in need; (3) enhance the availability of nutritional food information and programs on budgeting, shopping, cost comparison and meal planning to aging-out youth; and (4) develop an outcomes evaluation mechanism by which to measure the long-term impacts of each type of food security assistance resource upon the futures of Los Angeles County aging-out youth.

CalFresh Update For Two Quarters (July 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013 and October 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013)

For the period of July 2013 through September 2013, 211 foster youth terminated jurisdiction; however, only 60 were eligible to have a CalFresh application filed on their behalf by DCFS.

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The remaining 151 youth terminated jurisdiction, but CalFresh applications either could not be filed on their behalf (runaways), or were not needed (due to factors such as incarceration, returned home to parent, moved out of Los Angeles County jurisdiction or were receiving DPSS benefits before they terminated jurisdiction). DPSS received 51 applications from this group across all available support programs, as shown in Table One below. CalFresh applications were 41% of the total applications received by DPSS by this group.

For the period of October 1, 2013 through December 2013, 155 foster youth terminated jurisdiction; while only 37 were eligible to have a CalFresh application filed on their behalf by DCFS. The remaining 118 youth terminated jurisdiction, but for the same reasons detailed above, CalFresh applications could not be filed on their behalf. DPSS received 21 applications from this eligible group. CalFresh applications represented 38% of the total number of applications received by DPSS as submitted by eligible youth during this period.

Table One – Benefits Applied for By Youth

Quarter	CalFresh	%	Medical	%	General Relief	%	CalWorks	%	Total
Jul 2013 – Sept 2013	21	41%	15	29%	13	26%	2	4%	51
Oct 2013 – Dec 2013	8	38%	8	38%	4	19%	1	5%	21
Total	29	40%	23	32%	17	24%	3	4%	72

The CalFresh application submittal rate of 40% is only a marginal increase from the previous 39% compliance rate last reported to the Board for the period of March 2013 through June 2013. As a result, several new strategies are being employed as detailed later in this update.

The following tables reflect the disposition of all DPSS applications processed for all foster youth who aged out in the last two reporting out quarters:

Table Two - July 2013 through September 2013 Benefit Filings

Programs	Approved	%	Denied	%	Pending	%	Terminated	%	Total
CalWorks	3	75%	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	4
CalFresh	31	65%	15	31%	0	0%	2	4%	48
GR	13	41%	15	47%	0	0%	4	12%	32
Medi-Cal	37	92%	3	8%	0	0%	0	0%	40
Total	84	68%	34	27%	0	0%	6	5%	124

Table Three - October 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013 Benefit Filings:

Programs	Approved	%	Denied	%	Pending	%	Terminated	%	Total
CalWorks	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%	0	0%	3
CalFresh	16	47%	12	35%	5	15%	1	3%	34
GR	2	11%	12	67%	3	17%	1	5%	18
Medi-Cal	16	70%	0	0%	7	30%	0	0%	23
Total	36	46%	24	31%	16	20%	2	3%	78

The Department, in partnership with DPSS, continued to employ the following strategies during this quarter to reduce food insecurity among foster youth exiting DCFS through increasing compliance with the CalFresh application requirement.

- **Update of DPSS Outreach Project (the Project)** – The Project continues to be fully implemented, with a DPSS Outreach Worker assigned to all 18 DCFS regional offices. The DCFS and DPSS Project management staff continue to meet monthly to review the process steps involving both DCFS and DPSS staff to make necessary adjustments based on the monthly tracking reports of DCFS regional offices and the tracking reports maintained by out stationed DPSS Outreach workers.
- **Centralized CalFresh applications** – Completed CalFresh applications continue to be maintained in a centralized location within each DCFS regional office to expedite submission to out stationed DPSS staff at the time of termination of DCFS' jurisdiction.
- **Automated CalFresh Tracking System** – The internal DCFS CalFresh tracking system, developed for identification of youth who have terminated court jurisdiction and who require a completed CalFresh application, continues to be utilized in tracking CalFresh compliance by DCFS staff. DCFS also continues to require monthly CalFresh compliance reports from all regional offices to ensure an ongoing focus for this critical need for exiting foster youth.
- **Incentives for Youth Meeting with DPSS Outreach Project Staff** – The biggest challenge for completing CalFresh applications for exiting foster youth is having them met with the DPSS Outreach Worker in DCFS regional offices. A \$50.00 monetary incentive using departmental Chafee funds was under discussion which would reward eligible youth who meet with the DPSS Outreach Worker and complete a CalFresh application as part of their exiting county jurisdiction. This strategy has been fully implemented, beginning February 1, 2014.
- **Benefits Enrollment Project at Edelman Children's Court** – Both DCFS and DPSS are planning to implement, as a six-month pilot project, a DPSS benefits enrollment unit at Edelman Children's Court. The unit, comprised of two DPSS Outreach Workers, will test the feasibility of expediting health care benefits for DCFS families who attend their court hearings at Court. In addition, to families, the unit will be available to assist all transition age youth who attend their jurisdiction termination hearing to complete CalFresh applications. The project is targeted to begin by the end of May 2014.

Supervisor Antonovich Board Motion Amendment

The following are Supervisor Antonovich Board motion amendment updates.

- Los Angeles County Information Line (211) - 211 had revised the projected completion date of their enhanced web-site format changes based on input received from foster youth and other youth groups to November 30, 2013. It was completed on schedule with the new target date. An extended period of time was needed for the selected developer, 3DI Systems, to begin the work specified in the scope of work, including addressing bugs in the directory builder function that will make the website easier for youth to access their needed resources. These design bugs have been resolved for the most part. 211 met with California Youth Connection in January 2014 for its foster youth leadership to review the completed work. The response to the review by CYC's

youth leadership was positive, and the website is expected to formally launch in April 2014.

The next quarterly update will be provided to the Board by May 19, 2014, for a CalFresh update reporting DCFS' progress for the period of January 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014 and for a final update on the Antonovich amendment.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM
HK:nn

c: Chief Executive Officer
Director, Department of Public Social Services
Chief Probation Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Deputy Chief Executive Officer